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ONTANA LABOR MARKETIO

Monthly Review of EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK, LABOR SUPPLY, LABOR DEMAND, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT IS UNIVERSITY

MONTANA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE LIBRARY

Division of Unemployment Compensation Commission of Montana

Albert F. Root, Commissioner

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SEPTEMBER, 1959

August Employment At Seasonal Peak

Wage earners on August payrolls of Montana's non-farm employers reached the climax during the month with 168,300 employed according to estimates at mid-month compiled by the Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This was a rise of 1,200 over the final July employment figure after audit of records from 1,153 reporting establishments. The August average of non-agricultural employment for the nine years, 1950-58, is 165,600. Industrial employment during the past 10 years was highest in August, 1956, when 177,500 wage earners were on payrolls of industry and commerce. Traditionally, seasonal employment in Montana's diverse labor markets begins to rise with the coming of spring, builds steadily throughout the Symmer months, and attains the apex in August. Employment generally holds up well during September and October with only mild declines. From November through March adverse weather limits or completely halts many seasonal and outdoor endeavors, including construction, agriculture, tourism, and oil field activities. Employment in these fields and others vulnerable to seasonal and climatic pressures diminish and lay in hibernation until the awakening in April to begin another cycle.

Gains Exceed Last Year

Employment gains in August over July employment gains in August over July exceed the rise for the comparable period in 1958 by 800 workers. In addition, 1,300 more were employed this August than during the same month in 1958. In contrast a deficit of 6,000 from August, 1957 to August, 1958 was largely the result of the start of economic troubles in the metal mining industry at mid 1957 industry at mid 1957.

TREMORS SHAKE STATE LABOR MARKET AS STRIKE HALTS METAL MINING INDUSTRY

The August labor market picture was divided in two different parts. Seasonal labor demand, both in industry and agriculture, kept employment at high levels. Business along main streets was good. Service industries added 1,100 workers to its payrolls; increased volume at stores, cafes, service stations, and amusement centers brought a 200 rise in employment in the trade industries. Hundreds of new teachers were hired for the opening of the school year, lifting government employment at the state and local level 400 over July. The whir of activity increased at logging camps and sawmills in the timbered areas of the state, providing work for 200 additional workers. Contract construction was in many shapes and forms changing the geography and landscapes of both town and country. A total of 14,400 workers were busy building roads and irrigation canals, multi-million dollar office buildings and shopping centers, military installations and radar facilities school and college structures, grain elevators, industrial plants and new homes. Railroad employment was up 200 giving added strength to track and maintenance crews. Oil exploration and drilling started to show signs of greater activity as the month ended. Agriculture also was a good part of the healthy picture with thousands of seasonal workers engaged in haying, and the grain, fruit, sweet corn and vegetable harvests.

There was also another side to the picture. It began on August 19 when the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers struck the mines and plants of the Anaconda Company. As the strike entered the fourth week, about 8,500 workers in Anaconda, Butte, Great Falls, and East Helena were idled as a result of the dispute. Prospect of early settlement appears uncertain at this time with no common denominator yet in sight for successful bargaining between two widely separated areas of thought. Continued idleness of this large segment of Montana workers could lead to further inactivity in the labor market and reduced job openings in other industries in the communities affected. labor market and reduced Job openings in other industries in the communities affected. About 5,500 members of the union involved are barred by law from the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits, placing a heavy demand on the public welfare assistance funds. More than 2,000 workers, other than members of the strike union idled by the dispute, have filed claims for unemployment compensation benefits. Weekly claim totals doubled from the week prior to the strike and are expected to climb weekly as the strike

As the month ended, a dark shadow also fell across the growing lumber industry. Approximately 500 workers were idled when a lumber mill near Missoula was struck on August 31 by the lumber and sawmill workers. The union demand is for a 9½ cent hourly increase, nearly double the 5 cent raise offered by the employer. Meeting with a federal mediator on September 15 was the first negotiating session since the strike began. The meeting ended in a climate of pessimism about the immediate success of the first bargaining. Rumblings of strike threats were also heard in the Thompson Falls and Kalispell areas.

LABOR TURNOVER RATES IN MANUFACTURING AND MINING INDUSTRIES (per 100 employees)

	ACCESSION RATE							SEPARATION RATE								
*NDHC///DV	Total			New Hire			Total			Quit			Layoff			
INDUSTRY	1) Jul 1959	2) Jun 1959	Jul 1958	Jul 1959	Jun 1959	Jul 1958	Jul 1959	Jun 1959	Jul 1958	Jul 1959	Jun 1959	Jul 1958	Jul 1959	Jun 1959	Jul 1958	
3) All Manufacturing	5.9 2.9	9.4 10.7 7.8 6.8	2.4 2.6 0.5 2.1	4.2 5.2 1.8 2.3	7.6 8.7 6.4 5.7	2.0 2.0 0.1 1.9	3.6 4.1 3.6 2.8	5.1 4.6 5.1 6.0	2.6 3.0 1.9 2.0	2.1 2.2 1.6 2.0	2.4 2.1 1.7 2.8	1.3 1.4 1.1 1.0	0.4 0.4 * 0.5	0.5 0.4 0.1 0.7	0.7 1.0 0.4 0.3	
All Mining Metal Mining		6.4 6.7	3.6 3.6	2.6 1.3	3.6 2.4	1.3 0.1	5.2 5.0	6.3 5.9	10.0 11.7	3.3 3.9	3.2 3.7	2.9 3.9	0.8 0.1	1.7 0.5	6.3 6.9	

1) Preliminary rates based on all data available at publication time. 2) Figures previously revised on more complete returns.

3) Excludes sugar and canning industries. Total separations include discharges and miscellaneous separations.

¹⁹⁵⁹ rates not strictly comparable with 1958 rates due to change in reporting form from which basic data are obtained.

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Along the Hiring Line—Field Summary Sept. 1

ANACONDA, Deer Lodge, Philipsburg—(246 jobseekers, 114 new; 143 men, 103 women). Metal mining strike idled approximately 3,000 smelter workers; additional 500 railroad employees laid off until settlement. Working forces in trade and service industries being trimmed for duration of strike. Layoffs in Philipsburg further depressed area economy. Some idled workers leaving for west coast states.

BILLINGS, Columbus, Hardin, Hysham, Laurel, Red Lodge, Roundup—(1,132 jobseekers, 806 new; 718 men, 414 women). August building permits over two million dollars. Preliminary work begun on 1½ million dollar office building. Multi-million dollar shopping center to open October 1, another nearing completion, and one more in the planning stage. Estimated 75 new homes set for early construction. 130 employed on road and bridge construction with hiring for replacements only. Trade industries spurred by Fall sales. Railroad hiring slow. Grain harvest completed, sweet corn harvest in progress; sugar beet harvest to start late September.

BOZEMAN, Ennis, Three Forks, Trident—(302 jobseekers, 317 new; 210 men, 92 women). Variety of commercial, residential, and college buildings under construction. Women's residence hall at state college completed; 400 unit men's dormitory under way, 35 new homes in various stages of construction. Logging, pulp, and sawmills on full scale operations. Labor supply and demand in balance.

BUTTE, Virginia City, Whitehall—(2,029 jobseekers, 229 new; 1,638 men, 391 women). About 3,400 workers in mining and craft classifications idled by metal mining strike on August 19. Some salaried employees of Anaconda Company furloughed or placed on part-time salary for duration. Loss of purchasing power affected trade and service with some worker layoffs occurring and more expected as the strike lengthens. Construction of ½ million dollar motor hotel begun. Labor supply doubled from last

CUT BANK—(87 jobseekers, 141 new; 55 men, 32 women). Good activity in construction and oil fields during month. Three road jobs current, one paving job completed. Work under way on new power station at radar base. Home building and remodeling strong force. Most skilled labor employed. Grain harvest 20 per cent completed with surplus labor and combines.

DILLON—(52 jobseekers, 87 new; 33 men, 19 women. High level of agricultural work included haying, grain harvest, irrigating, fencing, and summer fallowing. Potato harvest next month will create demand for additional workers. Commercial build-

LABOR MARKET INDICATORS

Employment	Aug. 1959	July 1959	Aug. 1958	Aug. Avg 1950-58
Industrial Employment	168,300	167,100	167.000	165,600
New Job Applicants	4,514	4,115	3,925	3,078
Job Applicants, End of Month	7,777	7,792	8,772	3,708
Insured Unemployment, Week of	Sept. 4 1959	Aug. 7 1959	Sept. 5 1958	Avg. 1st Sept. Wk. 1955-59
New and Renewal Claims	1,159	340	698	555
Unemployed Weeks Filed	3,543	2,080	4,080	2,358
Total Unemployment Claims	4,702	2,420	4,778	2,711

ing and remodeling projects occupying most skilled craftsmen. Conversion to dial system terminated 22 telephone operators at end of month.

GLASGOW, Fort Peck, Malta, Opheim—(200 jobseekers, 265 new; 139 men, 61 women). Project activities at air base stepped up with 1,400 employed, a 140 increase over past two months. Base housing units in framing and sheeting stages to allow interior finishing during colder months. Home construction in city slow with 14 units under erection. Water survey problem retarding development of state land purchase for commercial use.

GLENDIVE, Circle, Wibaux—(82 jobseekers, 119 new; 58 men, 24 women). Road construction, and building projects including Wibaux high school, three commercial structures in Glendive, city water plant, power line, and seven new homes kept most skilled labor employed. Shortage of waitresses and cafe help during the month. Migratory sugar beet workers left the area. Dry land grain crops poor.

GREAT FALLS, Choteau Fort Benton, Stanford—(1.292 jobseekers, 738 new; 721 nen, 571 women). Strong worker demand during the month indicated high level of activity in labor market. Trade industries provided most of job openings; increased volume seen for September. Good weather favored construction projects; some threatened by material shortages. 1,200 smelter workers idled by metal mining strike, several hundred others laid off as a result. Shortage of clerical workers in area remains. Farm hiring over last year as grain harvest advances.

HAMILTON, Stevensville—(163 jobseckers, 51 new; 90 men, 73 women). Food processing major hiring factor during the month. Pic cherry yields less than last year. Apple harvest in September will be lighter than usual; potato and sugar beet harvest scheduled for October. Construction activity limited. Some indication of better mining prospects.

HAVRE, Clinook, Harlem—(85 jobseekers, 97 new; 23 men, 62 women). Future employment outlook good with new hires chiefly for replacement of students return-

ing to classes. Waning tourist traffic affected trade and service industries. Construction of two micro-wave stations set for early start. Contract for \$200,000 radar control building let. Railroad employment slow. Sugar beet and potato harvests scheduled late September.

HELENA, Boulder, Garrison, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs—(345 jobseekers, 161 new; 232 men, 113 women). Construction activity slowed during the month as some projects completed and contractors shifted crews between various jobs rather than new hiring. Metal mining strike idled approximately 100 East Helena smelter workers. Little or no hiring on highway overpass and valley irrigation projects. Farm labor demand diminishing.

KALISPELL, Columbia Falls, Eureka, Libby, Whitefish—(520 jobseekers. 322 new: 322 men, 198 women). Completion of sweet cherry harvest brought withdrawal of house, wives and other marginal workers from labor market. High level of activity in lumber manufacturing. Contract construction and aluminum processing show higher employment totals over last year. Trade and service industries continue in good volume. Demand for agricultural workers will lessen during September; potato harvest to begin in October.

LEWISTOWN, Harlowton, Ryegate, Winnett—(55 jobseekers, 58 new; 33 men, 22 women). Most major industrial groups show more hiring activity over last year with trade, service, and construction providing most of the new job openings. Agricultural activity centered mostly in the grain harvest. Labor supply and demand remained equal during the month with no special problems.

LIVINGSTON, Big Timber—(78 jobseekers, 51 new; 36 men, 42 women). Lumbering employment rose with maximum activity in both the woods and at mills. Strong market demand and good prices auger well for the future. Experienced woodsmen and mill workers in demand. Contract construction, both highway and building, holding up well, Five railroad machinists laid off during month; yard gangs placed on track maintenance crews. Farm work diminishing.

NINE YEARS OF MONTANA INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT TOTALS, BY MONTHS (in Thousands)

Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Aver.
1951 141.9	139.4	140.3	145.9	149.4	154.1	153.5	154.6	154.3	152.4	151.7	150.6	149.0
1952 140.5	140.7	143.0	149.7	154.8	159.9	159.5	161.2	160.4	157.9	156.0	154.9	153.2
1953 145.8	144.5	146.3	149.7	153.1	158.0	158.5	160.6	160.3	159.6	157.6	156.4	154.2
1954	145.5	147.2	151.1	155.7	161 6	164.1	165.4	154.8	153.9	158.2	155.7	155.0
1955	146.8	147.4	153.4	158.4	166.8	168.2	170.4	169.8	165.9	162.4	160.3	159.8
1956	152.1	154.2	160.7	167.0	175.0	175.7	177.5	176.9	173.6	167.9	165.2	166.7
1957	157.8	158.6	163.0	168.6	174.8	176.9	176.8	175.2	170,0	165.4	161.1	167.3
1958 151.9	149.0	149.2	153.6	159.0	164.5	165.0	167,0	165.0	162.0	160.0	157.8	158.7
1959 152.2	150.9	152.3	158.2	162 6	167.8	167.1	168.3*					

Along the Hiring Line—Field Summary Sept. 1

MLIES CITY, Baker, Ekalaka, Broadus, Jordan, Terry—(98 jobseekers, 106 new; 64 men, 34 women). Labor market activity remained on par with last month. The number of building permits increased over last year, but dollar volume was less. A few construction projects retarded by steel shortages. Area economy looks good for next 60 days.

M1SSOULA, Drummond, Arlee, Superior—(535 jobseekers, 364 new; 344 men, 191 women). City building permits during July totaled \$397,000, more than five times the year ago figure. Work began on the six million dollar expansion program at the paper mill outside the city. Estimated four million feet of decked lumber destroyed by fire at local lumber company with no damage to the mill or effect on employment totals. Increased demand in lumbering created good demand for loggers during month.

POLSON—(141 jobseekers, 62 new; 107 men, 34 women). Continued expansion in lumbering and logging speak well for future well-being of community. Construction also on upswing with newspaper building, housing development, and super market employing 100 workers. Some sawmills also adding additional facilities and equipment.

SHELBY—(157 jobseekers, 219 new; 117 men, 40 women). Construction at good level despite steel shortages which hampered some projects. Highway interchange project continues on surfacing and overpass structure. Full crews employed on building repair projects after Main Street fire. Railroad extra gang hiring up; more scheduled for September. Stable employment in trade and service industries despite less tourist volume.

SIDNEY—(58 jobseekers, 79 new; 25 men, 33 women). Commercial building limited. Construction activity chiefly in new home building and roof repairing after hail damage. Paving of downtown alleys completed. Two future projects, totaling one million dollars, include new high school and city sewer system. Sugar beet refining expected to employ 300 seasonal workers in October. Harvest of dry land grain crops completed with below average yields.

THOMPSON FALLS, Hot Springs—(58 jobseekers, 45 new; 35 men, 23 women). Noxon Dam employment holds at 250; demand during the month chiefly for air tool operators on clean-up work. Highway bridge project thrown off balance due to steel shortage. Home building in good progress, along with facilities for Forest Service personnel. Logging and sawmill production keeps steady pace. Good demand for railroad section hands during month.

WOLF POINT, Plentywood, Scobey—(62 jobseekers, 83 new; 36 men, 26 women). Construction limited to grain elevator erection, annexes to existing granaries and residential units. Some area projects completed including Flaxville school and highway paving. Post office buildings at Froid and Plentywood, and highway surfacing at Poplar among future projects. Oil field activity increased with four new wells being drilled. Some farm worker shortages during the month.

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN MONTANA (1)

(Compiled in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)

(Compiled in co-operation with Unite	d States	Bureau of	Labor S	statistics)	
	EM	PLOYME	NT	Net C	hange
INDUSTRY	Aug. 1959 (2)	July 1959 (3)	Aug. 1958	July '59 to Aug. '59	Aug. '58 to Aug. '59
NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES.	168,300	167,100	167,000	.1,200	1,300
Manufacturing	20,800	20,800	21,400	00	— 600
Durable goods	13,300	13,300	13,400	00	-100
Lumber and timber products Primary metals Other (4)	7,700 4,300 1,300	4,400	7,600 4,400 1,400	—1 00	100
Nondurable goods	7,500	7,500	8,000	00	— 500
Food and kindred products	3,900 1,700 900 1,000	1,800 900	4,300 1,700 1,000 1,000	-100 00	—100
Mining Metal mining Coal, quarrying and nonmetallic Petroleum-natural gas productson	9,200 5,800 700 2,700	5,900 700	8,400 4,900 700 2,800	-100 00	900
Contract Construction	14,400 4,400 5,700 4,300	4,400 5,900	13,700 3,900 6,200 3,600		500 500
Transportation and utilities Interstate railroads Transportation except railroads Utilities including communication	20,500 10,200 4,100 6,200	10,000 4,300	19,500 10,000 3,600 5,900		200 500
Trade	39,400 7,800 31,600 6,100 4,600 8,300 6,400 6,200	7,800 31,400 6,100 4,700 8,200 6,200	39,600 7,900 31,700 6,300 4,400 8,400 6,300 6,300	200 00 100 100 200	$\begin{array}{c} -100 \\ -100 \\ -200 \\ 200 \\ -100 \\ 100 \end{array}$
Finance, insurance and real estate	6,000	6,000	5,900	00	100
Services and miscellaneous	22,400 3,700 2,200 16,500	21,300 3,400 2,100 15,800	22,900 4,200 2,200 16,500	1,100 300 100 700	—5 00
Government	35,600 10,200 25,400	10.200	35,600 10,000 25,600	400 00 400	200
Great Falls Area (Cascade County) Manufacturing Contract construction Transportation and utilities Trade, wholesale and retail Services and miscellaneous (7) Government	19,500 3,100 1,900 2,300 5,800 4,100 2,300	19,400 3,100 2,100 2,200 5,600 4,100 2,300	19,700 3,100 2,100 2,300 5,600 3,900 2,700	100 00 200 100 200 00 00	00 200 200

- (1) Estimates include alt full and part-time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay during the pay period ending nearest the 15th of the month. Proprietors, firm members, personnel of the armed forces, domestic servants, and self-employed persons are excluded.
- (2) Preliminary estimates based on return from samples of 844 selected Montana establishments.
- ()3 Figures previously released have been revised on return from 1,153 such establishments.
- (4) Includes fabricated metal products, machinery except electrical, furniture, stone and clay products.
- (5) Includes apparel, chemicals, and miscellaneous manufacturing products.
- (6) Includes commercial trade schools, auto repair services and garages, miscellaneous repair services and hand trades, motion pictures, amusements and recreation, medical and health, law offices and professional services, non-profit membership organizations and businesses not otherwise classified.
- (7) Same as (6) above, also includes finance, real estate and mining.

COMPARISON OF BASIC LABOR MARKET ACTIVITIES IN AUGUST, 1959 AND AUGUST, 1958

Employment			s in F		Job Placement								U.I. Claims					
Service	Aug.	1959	Aug.		Aug.	1959	Aug.			Aug.	1959			Aug.	1958		Wk	. 9-5
Office	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	1959	1958
Anaconda Billings Bozennan Butte Cut Bank Dillon Glasgow Glendive Great Falls Hamilton Havre Helena Kalispell Lewistown Livingston Miles City Missoula	114 806 317 229 141 87 265 119 738 51 97 161 322 58' 51 106 364 62	22 211 100 52 64 42 28 210 11 30 43 94 12 10 30 110	126 673 237, 111 137, 97, 153, 87, 346, 56, 111, 198, 213, 86, 71, 109, 326, 66, 66, 66, 66, 66, 66, 66, 66, 66,	21 241 94 139 77 44 28 102 14 30 69 52 28 24 32 105 17	246 1,132 302 2,029 87 52 200 82 1,292 163 85; 345; 345; 520 55 78 98 98 535;	566 2544 92 569 23 155 366 166 280 300 133 103 87 71 100 188 130 38	329 1,002 426 2,211 157 65 235 90 714 209 99 494 770 75 125 101 784 183	70 304 145 682 54 19 55 31 195 50 19 185 170 9 35 18	45 520 225 116 65 34 302 149 703 71 165	55 1,431 198	100 1,951 423 194 201 312 740 488 2,166 553 1,005	33 579 153 37 84 162 170 60 343 24 502 172 125 166 68 48 48	90 414 226 49 58 33 265 103 492 40 130 130 564	30 1,231 224 83 164 241 388 212 1,194 520 583 81 20 392 322 115	120 1,645 450 132 222 274 653 315 1,686 50 713 211 538 456 124 211 273	32 212 147 20 9 91 145 144 666 364 371 85 163 173 62 81	860 404 25 1,636 588 27 27 27 68 147 208 18 53 34 285	27 61 66 65 1,52 7 7 3 3 5 4 4 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19 19
Shelby Sidney Thomp. Falls Wolf Point	219 79 45 83	84 ¹ 31 14 11	239 48 64 71	69 23 22 19	157 58 58 62	107 5 10 8	300 97 148 158	85 16 35 44	106 65 79 57	387 51 2 125	493 116 81 182	32	78 64 71 35	270 78 1 124		105 29 24	25 3 30	6 3 6
TOTALS	4,514	1,304	3,925	1,297	7,777	1,907	8,772	2,472	4,320	8,052	12,372	3,292	3,245	6,319	9,564	2,558	4,702	1

^{*}Include 59 claims of the Federal Employees UC Program, 111 same a year ago.

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS IN SELECTED MONTANA INDUSTRIES

(Produced in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics) (Hours and earnings data exclude administrative and salaried personnel)

	Average	Weekly	Earnings	Averag	ge Weekly	Hours	Average Hourly Earnings			
INDUSTRY	Aug.(1) 1959	July (2) 1959	Aug. 1958	Aug.(1) 1959	July (2) 1959	Aug. 1958	Aug.(1) 1959	July (2) 1959	Aug. 1958	
All Manufacturing	\$92.30	\$92.02	\$92.00	38.3	38.5	40.0	12.41	12.39	2.30	
Durable goods	91.87 93.03	90.86 93.03	92.52 89.92	38.6 38.6	38.5 38.6	40.4 38.1	2.38 2.41	2.36 2.41	2.29 2.36	
Nondurable goodsFood and kindred products	93.00 81.93	94.22 82.41	90.48	37.5 39.2	38.3 40.2	39.0 41.2	2.48 2.09	2 46 2.05	2.32 1.95	
All Mining	102.91	100.58	101.02	40.2	39.6	40.9	2.56	2.54	2.47	
Metal mining	97.78	97.78	95.13	37.9	37.9	37.9	2.58	2.58	2.51	
Transportation and Utilities (except raileds.)	100.88	98.23	94.92	38.1	38.8	39.4	2.22	2.22	2.11	
Transportation (except railroads)Utilities and communication	123.29 84.58	114.61 86.14	112.81 83.13							

⁽¹⁾ Preliminary estimates. (2) Figures previously released have been revised on more complete returns.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION OF MONTANA

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